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Minutes For May 12, 2005

SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING, HELD THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2005 AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER FLOOR HEARING ROOM, LOCATED AT 675 TEXAS STREET IN THE CITY OF FAIRFIELD

Commission Members Present: Leong, Alvarez, Hermsmeyer, Riddle

Commission Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Norris, Davis, Englebright, Ferguson

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:40 PM by Chairman Hermsmeyer.
 2. Roll Call. A quorum was confirmed. It was noted by staff Norris that Commissioner Garrison has resigned Commission due to moving out of the County and that Supervisor Kromm had been notified to make a reappointm
 3. Approval of Minutes: On call of Chair Hermsmeyer, Commissioner Leong made a motion to approve the m the April 21, 2005 Special meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riddle and approved b unanimous vote.
 4. Approval of Agenda. On call of Chair Hermsmeyer, no changes were noted. Commissioner Leong introduce to approve the agenda. The motion was carried by Commissioner Alvarez and approved by unanimous vote.
 5. Chair Announcements: None.
 6. Commissioner and Staff Comments. Commissioner Riddle objects to Special Meetings becoming regular m handling regular meeting business type of items. Commissioner Riddles suggests staff leave regular meeting item Meeting Agendas. The suggestion is so noted by staff.
Staff Norris advises the Commission that Master Plan updates for Lake Solano and Sandy Beach Parks have been appropriate Federal landowner Agency for review. Norris also states that the National Park Service is obtaining th Mt. Vaca property and will hold it until the County is prepared to accept it. There is a request for a celebration aft acceptance. It is also noted by Norris that along with Commissioners wanting a tour of the property the Board of would like a tour of the existing parks. A possible joint Board / Commission tour/celebration is discussed.
- Upcoming meetings of importance are mentioned by staff.
- Yolo County Parks Master Plan to be presented to their Board on May 17th at 10:00 am, 625 Court Street,
 - Commission members are invited to attend the Community Meeting hosted by the Friends of Solano Region District and the Greenbelt Alliance on Thursday May 26th at the Joe Nelson Community Center, 611 Village Drive,
 - Commission members are invited to actively attend the joint meeting of the Solano County Board of Super the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group on Tuesday May 31st at 7:00 pm in the County Administratio ground floor, 675 Texas Street, Fairfield.

A brief discussion follows on the elements of the May 31st meeting and the importance of Commissioner attendance.

7. Public Comments. Friends of the Solano park District representative Bob Berman confirmed that Commission received invitations to the May 26th Community Meeting.

8. Presentations/Updates/Actions

A. Consider and Recommend Formation Option(s) for Expansion of Solano County Regional Parks or a Future District.

Staff Norris went over a report to the Commission concerning the formation options for regional parks. The report the areas of Services, Boundaries, Funding, Impact to Existing Park Agreements, Consensus, Friends group, and a Recommendation for Commissioners to review and act upon before the joint meeting of the County Board of Supervisors, the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group on May 31, 2005 at 7:00 pm.

A lengthy discussion followed between Commissioners and staff. Commissioner Alvarez had questions about the funding mechanism. Commissioners were referred to a grid type hand out from a prior meeting showing various funding mechanisms. Staff answered questions about the boundaries of a County Service Area (CSA) and how the cities (and GVRD) would be able to opt in or out of the area. The same would go for a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) approach. Funding mechanisms discussed were special taxes, sales taxes, and benefit assessments. Commissioner Alvarez stated that there need service County wide system that can be able to pull on as many types of revenues as possible. A preliminary estimate of as much as \$30 million would be needed for all improvements and operations (for several years) if as many as projected park sites in the Park and Recreation Element were brought under management of County Parks. It was agencies from 9 out of the 14 potential park sites have returned some statement of level of interest. Once confirmed developed that would give the County 9 to 10 (including the Mount Vaca facility) future park sites warranting enhanced revenue support. Commissioner Riddle observed that this is a good investment and a reasonable long term price for public parks. Ferguson explained that County Service Area (CSA) funding can be designated for a specific area or County wide for all areas.

Commissioner Alvarez suggested that an activist group such as Friends of the Solano Regional Park District take the lead in getting outreach and consensus from various groups. He asked if staff were also able to "step up to the plate" on this. Staff advised that it will be up to the Board of Supervisors if the County Parks should move this forward or a group in the area proceeds with the County Parks supporting that group. Staff Ferguson made it clear that the important aspect is that the unincorporated areas buy in and that Countywide consensus is reached by the cities. Staff Norris noted that building broad base support are already in place along Putah Creek with its cooperative, Mare Island Regional Park with its The Rio Vista community now planning the connector trail, etc.; that it is just a matter of getting them all together from a regional perspective. Commissioner Leong observed that there once was stagnation in the County Parks and Commission in the last two or more years great progress has been made that should be attractive to build from for a regional approach. Commissioner Alvarez suggested that staff and Commissioners prepare a package that activist groups can move forward. Chair Hermesmeyer would expect that the Friends of the Solano Regional Park District would want to support the Commission need to make a statement along these lines to move a measure forward. A discussion followed on the potential timing of ballot measures. Staff Ferguson noted that the Board of Supervisors did not put County Parks on the top of the Staff Projects List, which may mean they are exercising patience and setting the time to build a consensus. Following a discussion, Staff Norris Commissioner Alvarez explained his package approach that would include funding for outreach efforts, a countywide park system and the County putting money on the table to open up some Solano Land Trust areas for public use. The Land Trust requested to have the County hire Rangers and patrol vehicles this fiscal year. A discussion followed concerning an agreement that the County should approve the expenditure to open the areas up and that would also help get public use once they had access to the areas.

Friends of the Solano Regional Park spokesman Bob Berman addressed the Commission. He agreed that their goal was to find additional funding mechanisms for regional parks. Most of what he heard the Commission say is positive and that was the basis for short and long term solutions. The "package" concept of Commissioner Alvarez works for the new proposal, but he noted though that staff had not mentioned governance and that this is an important issue with the Board of Supervisors. It is hard to know what the short and long term benefits of a CSA or JPA for Parks would be if agencies can come to an agreement. Ferguson noted that the Board of Supervisors would be in control of a County Service Area with a possible advisory role. That the agencies within the JPA would determine the governance and tenure of that approach. Commissioner Riddle

the Friends are making requests for funding. Berman noted that his group would be willing to work on Countywide but getting community meetings together is expensive and funding is needed for that as Commissioner Alvarez has said earlier. A full service parks operation and dedicated funding source are mostly what is needed now. Commissioner Leong indicated that County staff have begun to move towards a full service perspective with the reassignment of a full time Parks Manager, an updated Element, Master Plans for the principal parks and much more. But they need more help. Commissioner Hermsmeyer stated his agreement with what has been said.

Discussion then returned to recommending the County fund opening the Lynch Canyon property to more public access. This leads to a discussion of whether or not the Board would commit that amount of General Fund money to County Parks. A wider consensus and future funding mechanisms are nearer to happening. There are other departments in need of funds. Ferguson noted that the other Tri-City and County partners have not been asked to help fund the operation. Commissioner Leong thinks the CAO will want to mention that.

Upon prompting from staff Norris, the discussion then turned to forming a recommendation to take to the Board of Supervisors supporting the formation of a County wide park system. A final recommendation is drafted with the assistance of Commissioner Leong moved to recommend the following:

- a) that the Board of Supervisors support a County wide regional park system using a governance structure that includes the County Service Area and/or a joint powers agency, that also has County wide support of the cities and communities, such as the Friends of Solano Regional Park District; and
- b) that the Board of Supervisors support the Solano Land Trust request for the County Parks to manage Lynch Canyon regional park in order to provide better access and recreational opportunities to Solano County residents.

The motion is seconded by Commissioner Riddle and approved by unanimous vote.

B. Set a new annual schedule for awards of the Fish & Wildlife Fund. Commissioner Alvarez notes that he will make the November 10th date. The regular meeting date of the Commission when this would occur will be reset accordingly. Commissioners generally agree on the dates otherwise and they are set with the possibility of a special meeting in October or the selection of a subcommittee to review the applications prior to the November meeting. The following Schedule was thus set:

- July 14, 2005 – Authorize distribution of applications.
- September 1, 2005 -- Closing date for applications to be submitted.
- September 8, 2005 – Confirm acceptance of applications/initial review of qualified applicants.
- October 2005 – Either a Special meeting or subcommittee for further review of applications, as needed.
- November 17, 2005 – Presentations by qualified applicants to the Commission.
- January 12, 2005 – Recommendations by the Commission to the Board on Fund awards.

Staff Norris noted that there is a large amount of money that may become available to the Fish and Wildlife Fund mitigation from a case settlement. A discussion followed with Commissioners agreeing on learning the ways in which it can be spent and if it can be rolled over for multiple years. Staff Norris offered to have County Council attend the July meeting and give the Commission advice on proper dispensing of the mitigation fund.

9. Future Agenda Items (note that some of these items are generic placeholders to aid with setting specific items on agendas)

- A. Staff report on ADA policy for campsite reservations.
- B. Hear report on Mare Island Regional Park
- C. Consider new park sites.
- D. Consider new funding sources for County Parks.
- E. Consider a naming policy for parks and park facilities.
- F. Recommendation to prohibit or restrict smoking in the Parks (beyond fire safety).
- G. Recommendation to prohibit or restrict alcoholic beverages in the Parks.

- H. Joint Parks Planning with Yolo County; it was noted by Chair Hermsmeyer that this item should move up in imp
- I. Presentation by the Suisun Resource Conservation District on boat ramp development.
- J. Visitor Center development update.
- K. Tour/celebration of the Mount Vaca facility and existing County Parks; added at general request of the Commis

Commissioner Riddle and Hermsmeyer agree to make the joint meeting
of the County Board of Supervisors and the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group on May 31, 2005.

Commissioners confirm that the next regular meeting will be on July 14, 2005 at 5:30 PM.

Adjournment. Commissioner Hermsmeyer adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.

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